

## Editorial

This issue of the *Review* relates to two themes of relevance to social work and social sciences, the involvement of people who use services and some of the current challenges in social work education.

Since the new labour government in the UK emphasised the importance of patient and public involvement (PPI) in health care and related services over a decade ago this theme has continued with the shift in political power to the coalition. Current politicians and policy makers try increasingly to encourage members of the public to take more responsibility for their health and wellbeing and adopt more preventative strategies that will in turn support less reliance on specialist services. The importance of this approach was emphasised recently in the Mental Health Foundations' year long specialist inquiry into the future of mental health services (Mental Health Foundation, 2013). The inquiry highlighted the importance of involving service-users in approaches to improve care and prevention and as a means of gathering these collective experiences as evidence of what works. Peer support was seen as a valuable intervention alongside more mainstream treatments.

The first three papers in this edition speak to this agenda. Macdonald and Taylor-Gooby investigates the role of patient and public involvement in the NHS from the perspective of volunteers and health practitioners including GPs and health managers, while Eriksen offers a Norwegian perspective on how service users participate and cope with their everyday life. This in turn can inform professional engagement. Also from Norway Øien and Lillevik describe how helpers' attitudes are of key importance to prevent violence and aggression in young people living in childcare establishments.

Whilst in the UK the PPI reforms have been underway over the last decade social work education is still grappling with the reforms stemming from the Munroe report and during this last academic session many courses will have been accredited by the Health and Care Professions Council as the new professional body and endorsed by the College of Social Work. These developments in the UK reflect a reform agenda for change that is happening more globally. Duschinsky and colleagues explore in this challenging context, how social work educators can help to improve social work students' standards of essay writing. In the final paper by Keen et al attention is turned to the agenda of improving leadership in social work practice and how this can be aligned with the new Professional Capabilities Framework introduced by the College of Social Work in England.

From this collection of papers one thing seems certain that in the world of social science reform is here to stay and takes many guises. That this journal has made a

significant contribution to the national and international debates surrounding reform in many areas and on a number of different levels over the last year is a reflection of the quality of the papers we continue to receive. As this is our final issue to be published in 2013, I would like to thank all our contributors and my fellow Editor Nigel Malin for making these debates so interesting and informative. Here's to this theme continuing in 2014.

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